REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in at least claims 9 and 10.

Claims 8 and 11-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim et al. (U.S. 6,567,144) in view of Kuo (U.S. 6,424,397). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because neither of the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests a first orientation control element provided to be located both on the pixel electrode, and near the edge of the pixel electrode on the substrate, as in claim 8 of the present invention, as amended.

The Examiner correctly acknowledges that Kim fails to disclose any element, analogous to the first orientation control element of the present invention, that is located near the edge of the pixel electrode. The Examiner relies only upon the Kuo reference for teaching or suggesting such features. Kuo, however, fails to teach or suggest such features of the first orientation element of the present invention, even when considered in combination with Kim.

In the drawings cited by the Examiner, Kuo clearly shows that the slit wings 718a are not formed on the transparent electrode layer 712 (which the Examiner deems analogous to the pixel electrode of the present invention), but only outside the entire area occupied by the electrode layer. As shown in several drawings of the present Application though, the first orientation control element is clearly provided on the pixel electrode itself, namely, on the area physically occupied by the pixel electrode. Thus, the first orientation

element can be protrusions formed on top of the pixel, slits formed in the pixel, a hollow formed in an element above or below the area of pixel, etc.

Although these features of the present invention should have been already clear from the claim, Applicants appreciate that the compound prepositional phrase that appeared in the claim as last amended may have not been interpreted by the Examiner as intended. Accordingly, claim 8 has been further amended herein to affirmatively recite the first orientation control element is actually formed on the pixel electrode itself. Because neither of the cited references teaches or suggests any such features, Applicants submit that the outstanding obviousness rejection has been overcome at least by this grammatical clarification to claim 8.

Claims 11 and 12 depend directly from independent claim 8, and therefore include all of the features of the base claim, plus additional features. Accordingly, claims 11 and 12 should be in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 8.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 8-12, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if yet another interview would help expedite prosecution.

Customer No. 24978

November 21, 2006
300 South Wacker Drive
Suite 2500
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: (312) 360-0080
Facsimile: (312) 360-9315
P:\DOCS\1117\66107\AX6246.DOC

Respectfully submitted,
GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By
Josh C. Snider
Registration No. 47,954